

ACQUIREMENT OF LAND IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AS SITES FOR PUBLIC BUILDINGS, ETC.

FEBRUARY 25, 1925.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. UNDERHILL, from the Committee on the District of Columbia, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 12388]

The Committee on the District of Columbia, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 12388) for the acquirement of land in the District of Columbia as sites for public buildings and other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with the recommendation that the bill do pass.

The area between the Treasury and the Capitol on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue and bordering on the Mall is an eyesore and disgrace to the Nation's Capital. It was the plan of George Washington, and has been since that time the intention of the executive and legislative departments of the Government, ultimately to procure these lands for park and building purposes.

The Government at the present time owns several lots or areas on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue, including the blocks occupied now by the Center Market, the Post Office Building, the Municipal Building, and the lot where Poli's Theater is located. The lots named in this bill are the remainder of the property on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue opposite the Mall and three lots on the north side just to the right of the Peace Monument.

If this land is acquired it will wipe out various buildings commonly known as "Chinese joints," some objectionable and dilapidated business buildings, and all of the eyesores from the Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial, giving an uninterrupted view of the Capitol, the Washington Monument, and the Lincoln Memorial.

It is very necessary that this land should be acquired immediately. Congress has authorized, and the President has approved, the building of a memorial bridge across the Potomac almost directly at the rear of the Lincoln Memorial. The value of these various lots has

increased materially in the past few years, and with the building of this bridge the price of such lots will be doubled or trebled. It would be extremely desirable not only from an artistic viewpoint but also as a matter of pride in the Nation's Capital to acquire this land. From a material standpoint it would provide locations for contemplated public buildings. Congress has recently authorized an appropriation for public buildings. This location would be the most appropriate place for buildings of a public character.

To sum it all up, the Government should own all of this land, whether it uses it for park or building purposes. It would beautify the Capital and provide proper approaches to the Memorial Bridge, the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the Capitol, and the White House.

The time will never be more appropriate than now as the cost will constantly increase as the years go on.

This bill has the hearty support of the Superintendent of Public Buildings and Grounds and has met with universal approval from the people of the District and the Nation.

CHARLES L. UNDERHILL.

